Conference on Disarmament

14 September 2018

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Note Verbale dated 14 September 2018 from the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran addressed to the Secretariat of the Conference on Disarmament, transmitting the text of the statement delivered by H.E. Mr. Esmaeil Baghaei, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in the plenary session of the Conference on Disarmament on 14 September 2018.

The Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva presents its complements to the Office for Disarmament Affairs in its capacity as the Secretariat of the Conference on Disarmament and has the honor to attach a copy of the statement delivered by H.E. Mr. Esmaeil Baghaei, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in the plenary session of the Conference on Disarmament on 14 September 2018. It is kindly requested that the statement be registered as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament.

The Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office for Disarmament Affairs the assurances of its highest consideration.

(Signed) Mr. Esmaeil Baghaei

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Statement by Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran before the Conference on Disarmament

Geneva, 14 September 2018

Madam President,

The delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran would like to align itself with the statement made by distinguished delegate of Zimbabwe on behalf of Group 21.

In my short remarks yesterday morning, I stressed the need to avoid politicization of our reporting scheme and to steer clear of dangerous precedent-setting notions which could corrode the Conference on Disarmament long established procedures and adversely affect the overall functioning of the Conference. I was heartened to see many delegations made a reference more than once to the Conference on Disarmament Rules of Procedures and the need to observe it. I wish their position in this respect would be consistent.

I would like to reiterate our firm and principled position that the Conference of Disarmament Rules of Procedures must be respected. And in this regard let me share with you a couple of points:

1. The controversy created over the Presidency of Syrian Arab Republic in the Conference of Disarmament is pointless and unnecessary. The whole point is that Syria assumed Conference on Disarmament Presidency in strict accordance with the Rules of Procedures of the Conference on Disarmament, and as testified by many delegations its performance as the President was exemplarily professional.

2. One does not need to cut off their nose to spite their face. It would simply be consequential; that certain delegations did not like Syria to preside over the Conference on Disarmament, for any reason or excuse whatsoever, could not entitle them to berate the Conference on Disarmament or undercut its Rules of Procedure. There is nothing in the Conference on Disarmament's Rules of Procedures which could be interpreted or even misinterpreted to qualify or conditionalize a member State's right to preside over the Conference on Disarmament by rotation, **unless** certain parties are set to derail the Conference on Disarmament by engaging Member States in unnecessary argumentations in order to deviate and divert attention from the Conference on Disarmament's principal mandate, which is "disarmament".

3. The Note Verbale, circulated by the Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on 7 September on behalf of a group of States is simply a disservice to the Conference on Disarmament and its core mandate, which is multilateral disarmament, by unnecessarily magnifying a non-issue that should have been resolved weeks ago; it simply ignores and undermines the Conference on Disarmament Rules of Procedure, in particular its paragraphs 3 and 9. Equally important it derides a long-established culture of professionalism and respect prevalent in this body by using derogatory language against a Member State.

4. Let's not mix things together; if a simple political claim against a State is to be used to strip it of its right under the Conference on Disarmament rules to preside, then by analogy those States that have indeed used weapons of mass destruction in cold blood or have knowingly provided chemical materials or arsenals to the warring parties, including to Saddam Hussein's regime during his bloody aggressive war against Iran, are fairly expected to forego their membership in the Conference on Disarmament altogether!

5. Suffice it to note that a number of States that co-sponsored Note Verbale dated 7 September did provide chemical materials, sometimes under the coverage of "pesticides", to Saddam's Iraq. Do such States enjoy

"legitimacy" to preside over the Conference on Disarmament for the coming months? That's a question we should perhaps wait to raise when the time comes.

I thank you Madam President